Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved:
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

I publish today Tolstoi's latest work, "The Fruits of Culture." It is a comedy in four acts, and gives a very amusing picture of the aristocracy of Russia. Fuller particulars will be found in the advertising columns.

A most excellent editorial is that which Liberty reprints from the pages of the Galveston "News" on the subject of resistance to tyranny and the proper methods of securing liberty. It will furnish abundant material for reflection and discussion to those who talk about the right and inevitableness of forcible revolution and of the efficacy of "propaganda by deed."

A bill has been introduced in the Quebec Legislative Council rendering voting compulsory on every qualified "elector." At first sight, as an exchange observes, "the idea looks purely farcical; at second sight, decidedly tyrannical; at third sight, full of humanity and far-reaching wisdom." The social disturbances that would result from the operation of such a law could have but one issue, — the total abolition of voting and universal disgust with the whole scheme of "popular government." Of course, there may follow a reversion to despotism, which is what the reactionaries anticipate; but there may come real political freedom, which is what we hope and work for.

The complimentary references to the American Economic Association made by some English economists are entirely undeserved. The Association's treatment of Hugo Bilgram's paper on "Involuntary Idleness" considered in its relation to the existing monetary monopoly, and President Walker's last annual address, in which very important questions were dismissed in the most off-hand and thoughtless manner, show that no good can come of the Association, and that it represents nothing but mediocrity, unreasoning conservatism, and exploded doctrines. Our American economists are far, very far behind their English co-workers. The American school has not yet produced a Toynbee, a Leslie, an Ingram, or even a Marshall.

Labor Commissioner Carroll D. Wright read a report on Statistics at the recent meeting of the American Economic Association. He referred to the work done by American official statisticians during the past two decades, candidly, however, admitting that it has fallen in quality below the work of the statisticians of the European continent. He also expressed regret that little progress is apparent in regard to the more complete registration of births, deaths, and marriages. Then, after other regrets and admissions damaging to officialism, the Colonel, who, it must be remembered, is known to sympathize with State Socialism, called attention to the fact (the significance of which he probably does not realize) that "great journals" are paying increased attention to the accurate use of statistics, and remarked that this work of the "great journals," published by private parties, not by the government, and for private benefit, not for the public good, — that their work "is rapidly retiring the statistical mechanic, — the man who is ready to distort statistical statements in order to prove particular theories"! Compare the results of private enterprise and competitive activities with those of official work carried on "in the interest of the whole people."

The reader's attention is called to the remarkable and able article reproduced, on another page of this issue, from the New York "Sun" under the caption "Political Organization *versus* Mutualism." The reader will need no help from me to discover that the article teaches Anarchism pure and simple; but not every reader may detect, as I do, in the author's style and phraseology strong indication of his familiarity with and indebtedness to the father of Anarchism, Proudhon. It is certainly very gratifying and encouraging to find among the contributors to the "Sun" a more or less consistent disciple of Proudhon. One error in the article must be pointed out right here. The author says that the Farmers' Alliance is determined, by its Sub-Treasury scheme, to destroy the economic banking system and substitute in its place a political banking system. There is no warrant whatever for this charge. The present banking system is essentially political, and the farmers' scheme does not aim at changing its "political" nature, but is intended to improve its economic side. The farmers are economically less unsound, but politically no more unsound than the defenders of the present monopoly banking system. Economic banking will come when the business is taken out of the hands of government entirely and left to be dealt with and carried out by private agencies.

The chief of the Massachusetts bureau of labor statistics, in his last report, calls attention to the fact that while the tendency during this century has been to the removal of restrictions upon the interchange of commodities, there has been, on the other hand, a marked tendency toward governmental regulation of the exchange of services. But he does not regard the two tendencies as opposed to each other, holding that they have really been mutually dependent, the movement which in one direction has aimed at unrestricted competition having in another direction necessitated governmental interference with individual action. This is a very ingenious explanation. The trouble with it is that the facts perversely refuse to bow to it. We see that the class in whose interest this very "governmental interference with individual action" has been urged and practised are not at all satisfied with the results of the policy, and demand, in addition to the restrictions upon the exchange of services, a great deal of restriction upon the interchange of commodities. In fact, they demand nothing *but* restrictions, deploring any and all opposite tendencies. Further investigation, the Chief will find, is bound to disclose to him the truth that no compromise between liberty and restriction will answer, and that the choice lies between complete liberty and complete regulation of the exchange of services and the interchange of commodities.

Referring to "X's" letter on Parnell, on another page, Liberty has overlooked nothing. Liberty's paragraph was not a defence of Parnell, but an attack upon his critics. The phrase complained of was used to belittle Parnell's offence as compared with one much greater which passed uncondemned. If I had been discussing his offence intrinsically and from my own standpoint, I should have used different language. "X" admits that *all* the opposition to Parnell in the English press has been "the noisy outcry of Cant." I think it more important to drown this outcry than to overthrow Parnell. I quite agree that Parnell did not treat O'Shea properly. Still, somehow I can't rise quite to "X's" pitch of indignation against him. If O'Shea had been a citizen of a country where wives are kept veiled and where to view the features of another's wife is as grave an offence as adultery is in England, and if Parnell had under such circumstances entered the house of his friend O'Shea and, while pretending to be observant of the prevailing morals, had succeeded in inducing Mrs. O'Shea to lift her veil in his presence, he would have been guilty of as outrageous a violation of his friend's trust as that with which he is now charged. Nevertheless, in both cases I find myself half inclined to exclaim: "After all, the fool who believes in such nonsense deserves to be cheated." At any rate, I am very sure that it is not proper for protective agencies to take cognizance of such offences, and in that sense Anarchy does mean "the liberty of every man to violate the trust reposed in him by a friend's hospitality." But, instead of visiting his loathing and contempt on Anarchy for this reason, I would counsel "X" to concentrate them on the objectionable offender, from which punishment he will suffer sufficiently. It may be true that "a man who will cheat his friend will betray his country." It seems as if it ought to be true. Nevertheless it will be generally admitted, I think, that many statesmen who never did betray their country have cheated their friends substantially as Parnell cheated O'Shea. And if I were an Irishman and desired Home Rule above all other things, I believe I should trust Parnell to get it for me, and take the chances.

Force, Right, and Intelligence.

[Galveston News.]

So far as abstract propositions go it is mere quavering to assert the right to meet force with force. The application of force in the manner of despots is understood to be outside of considerations of right; hence it is as pertinent to say that there can be no reasonable requirement for ascertaining the right of any method of resistance where all right is suspended by the aggressor as to affirm that resistance is right. Where tyranny has overthrown all right, resistance simply does not have to justify itself at all or by any rule which the tyrant can lay down. It only has to be successful if it can, and just to third parties meanwhile. To argue the question of right of resistance to tyranny betrays a fatal superstition. But it is a very much worse thing that the Memphis "Appeal-Avalanche" says in this:

Force should meet force. Toleration begets confidence in the mind of the tyrant. To yield an inch is to give an ell. This is history. The hand of the despot is only stayed when his subjects rise in the might of mass. Necessity knows no law. Self-preservation justifies any remedy.

Here is a sad mixture. The justification of any remedy and the tendency of tolerance to encourage tyranny are propositions entirely separate from the advice to meet force with force. Force should be met with intelligence. The hand of the despot generally comes down with more crushing power when his subjects are silly enough to rise in their imagined might in precinct mobs. First of all they need advisers who possess brains and reflection enough to discern the difference between heroic idiocy and expedient policy and who do not go off at half-cock on making the wonderful discovery that resistance to tyranny is always right. Those fellows would have made a great advance if they had realized that the tyrant is intellectually far ahead of them. He doesn't have to be right. He prepares to spit them on their sentiments, hurrying them into insane conduct. Silly fellows cannot help "rising" and giving the tyrant just what he wants. The tyrant will generally have a law on his side, order on his side, and soldiers to carry out his decrees, and when the right of acting in an idiotic manner is preached to people it crazes them into throwing away their lives and their cause.

Proudhon, the Father of Anarchism.

HIS PERSONALITY AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

[From Dr. S. Engländer's "Abolition of the State."*]

Proudhon thus proved to the Republicans that they had no idea of what a government consisted: "Monarchy is not one of those things which vanish with the first breath, or by a decree of the Hotel de Ville. To change society from a monarchy to a republic is as difficult as to transform the human mind. Centuries, the work of twenty generations, are needed to reach the goal. You believe when you lost the Emperor, or later when you drove out Charles X. or Louis Philippe, that you had destroyed this institution, whereas you had but taken down the signboard. The system is inviolate in your ideas and habits. I should astonish many an honest democrat if I undertook to prove to him that he and the whole Democratic party have never held any but monarchical ideas, that everything they think, speak, propose, or dream of, is monarchy. The Communism of the Icarians, what is it but absolute monarchy? Even so is it with the other social Utopias. To found liberty, equality, and fraternity, Cabet makes himself a king, Saint Simon a high priest, Pierre Leroux a prophet, and Louis Blanc a dictator. The most insignificant manager of a workingmen's association strives to gather all the workingmen of his station beneath his hand. There is always the same hierarchical prejudice, the same mania for government. Superstition in that which should emanate from divine right is, spite of all the calumnies of which it has been the object, more deeply rooted than ever. As, according to a thoroughly monarchical proverb, 'the voice of the people is the voice of God,' so is divine right nothing more than a national decree formulated by universal suffrage. Without going back to the election of Hugh Capet, not mentioning the equally wonderful election of Louis Bonaparte as President of the Republic, yet the species of sanctification which the representatives of the people receive in the sacrament of popular election is of this a proof. In what, I ask, does the representative of the people elected by universal suffrage differ from a divine-right monarch? The representative concentrates in his person the will, the being of one hundred thousand, perhaps two hundred thousand, perhaps a million citizens of the State. He is invested with unlimited, absolute, full powers. He is able to pass laws . . . to decide, to regulate all divine and human, natural and supernatural, affairs in his complete authority, or, as is said of the Pope, without previous study, and only in consequence of the knowledge imparted to him by the act of election. The constitution declares him to be inviolable, his decrees are infallible. What can the man-king, the only representative of sovereignty, do more than this? The man, elected by four departments at once, is by this simple fact of the accumulation of votes an extraordinary personage; and when more than five millions of votes are recorded for him, a God! Hence the people conceives for those whom it has elected an absolute adoration; and what is really laughable, this idolatry for representatives seizes also those persons who are the objects of the idolatry. Look at these men who majestically have encamped upon the Parliamentary Sinai, there is not one of them but arrogates to himself a species of jurisdiction over the thoughts of the people. If the 450 members of the Legislative majority are so well leading us on, that is only because they believe themselves to be more infallible, more legitimate, more king than Charles X. or Louis Philippe. The monarchical principle is as quick, as complete in an assembly emanating from the entrails of a people as in a legitimate king: it will be regarded as infallible, and will be treated with as much majesty as the more or less authentic scion of a family privileged and sanctified *ad hoc*. For a true divine right is universal suffrage, according as we explain it."

Proudhon regards the State as the external constitution of social power. By this external constitution of its power and sovereignty, the people does not govern itself, but soon either an individual, or several persons, are by the title of election or inheritance empowered to rule. The people is thus regarded as incompetent to govern itself, and we start with the hypothesis that society can only express itself in the monarchical incarnation, the aristocratic usurpation, or the democratic mandate.

Proudhon denies this conception of a collective being, the State, the Government, whether it adopts a royalist or a democratic coloring, and demands the personage, the autonomy, the physical, intellectual, and moral individuality of the masses. He is of opinion that every State constitution has no other object than to lead society to this condition of autonomy, and that absolute monarchy as well as representative democracy are but rungs of the political ladder on which societies rise to a knowledge and possession of themselves. In this anarchy he recognizes the highest degree of liberty and order mankind can achieve, and the true formula of the Republic, so that between Republic and Government, between Universal Suffrage and the State, there exists a contradiction.

This view he defends in a double way, first by the historical and negative method, since he proves that every government has become impossible, and that by its very principles a government must be counter-revolutionary and reactionary; and also by the proof that by economic reform and industrial solidarity a people is brought to reflection, and acquires a knowledge of itself, and acts as one individual. And as the psychology of a single individual is investigated, so Proudhon regarded the psychology of nations and humanity as a possible science. Thus Proudhon regards, as the aim of the Revolution which was commenced by the events of February, the establishment of absolute human and civic liberty. With this object he lays down politically the following formula: "Organization of universal suffrage, and the gradual inversion of the governing power in society"; economically, organization of circulation and credit — that is, the merging of the capitalist in the workman. This formula forms the starting point of his system, and serves also as a real and direct explanation of the Revolution.

These views on government were first pronounced by Proudhon in 1840, in his work, "What is Property? or, Inquiries into the Principle of Right and Government." In the last chapter of that work the following passage occurs:

"Which form of government shall we prefer? How can you ask? doubtless answer many of my young readers; you are a Republican! Republican, yes; but that word denotes nothing. *Res publica* — that is, the public affairs; so that everyone who will promote public affairs can call himself a republican. Kings may be considered as republicans. Well, then, you are a Democrat? No! How? You are a Monarchist? No! A Constitutionalist? Heaven forbid! Then you are an Aristocrat? You want a mixed system of government? Still less. What are you, then? I am an Anarchist!"

This view of the State pervades all his writings, and he confirmed it in his Parliamentary course. On November 4, 1848, he addressed a letter to the editor of the "Moniteur," in which he explained his vote against the Constitution. He said that after four months' discussion he found it impossible to abstain from participating in the vote, but that he considered it necessary to give an account of his vote. He did not vote against the Constitution from an empty mania for opposition or revolutionary agitation, nor yet because it contained matters which he much wished away, and did not contain other matters which he should like to have seen in it. If such arguments could move the mind of a representative, there would never be a vote about a law. He had voted against the Constitution because it was a constitution. What constituted a constitution — he refers to a political constitution, since no other can come in question — was the partition of sovereignty, the separation of power into legislative and executive. In that consisted the principle and substance of every constitution; beyond that there was no such thing as a constitution — only a sovereign authority issuing decrees, which were executed by its committees and ministers. We are unaccustomed to such an organization of sovereignty, and yet a republican government is nothing else. Proudhon held that in a republic a constitution was superfluous, and that the provisional state of things which had been a power for the previous eight months, could be made definitive with somewhat more regularity and somewhat less respect for monarchical traditions. He was convinced that the Constitution, the first act of which consisted in the establishment of a Presidency, with all its prerogatives, ambitions, and fallacious hopes, was rather a danger to than a guarantee of liberty. What Proudhon in his quality of representative carefully expressed in his letter, that he consistently elaborated in his writings, not in blind opposition to the necessary restraints and forms, but in full consciousness of liberty.

This phase of Proudhon's doctrine is for us who have hitherto lived too much in abstract ideas at first confusing and incomprehensible. Our State is practically only an abstract formula, which can only exist as the unnatural and unreal separation of soul and matter. It is only a spiritualistic lie, and contains just as much truth as the immaculate conception of Mary. At present the question is to pass from the abstract to the real, and that will be effected by the social reform for which Proudhon paved the way. First of all, it will fix the relation of man to man, which hitherto has been done by politicians only so far as the most pressing necessity demanded. Up to the present the State has concerned itself about the individual only so far as to give him alms or to throw him into a prison. We now only exist for the State, and not the State for us. Therefore it is impossible to draw a conclusion from State affairs to the condition of its component individual parts, either economically or politically.

Statistics of a State can prove its prosperity by the clearest figures; we can from these figures come to the conclusion that every branch of industry, trade, and agriculture is in the most flourishing condition, and yet it may not be true. The total amount might not be reducible to separate amounts, and, despite the figures, two-thirds of the people in the State may be beggars. National economy has at present treated all these questions in the lump, it has reflected only the total amount. So is it politically. A State as a State can offer the highest amount of political freedom, and yet no conclusion as to individual freedom can be drawn. The example of England will exactly prove this. That State is nothing but a political formula. The demands of individual political freedom are there complied with as in no other country, and yet the individual is not really free.

Mankind can and will be governed no longer. Proudhon rooted up the State, that Moloch which consumes us all, sucks our strength, practises usury with every one, is held together by blood, and prides itself upon it, and is necessarily based upon the stupidity of the people.

The good the State has done to mankind is not to be ascribed to it, but to the social ties existing in it, from that of family to that of science. Those individuals alone are great who have cut themselves loose from the State, who do not regard the accidental geographical frontier of the State as a form of mankind, and who only consider the relationship of their own individuality to that of their fellow-creatures to be bounded by the universe, and who, driven by a divine egotism, are, like Schiller's Marquis Posa, citizens of an age which is still to come.

To be continued.

*Continued from No. 174.

The Question of Interest.

[Albert Tarn in Financial Reformer.]

It is an unfortunate circumstance that so many people who write upon and discuss the question of interest confine their arguments within a narrow circle, and continue to go round and round the same. We have some people (Socialists) who say that interest is wrong, and must be annihilated by forcible confiscation of property; another set, who morally protest against interest, and either voluntarily abjure it, or at any rate limit its amount (as some coöperators do) to a certain rate, arrived at quite arbitrarily; whilst still another set, objecting on economic grounds both to force and to philanthropy, defend it.

These latter say: here is A possessing a spade, and B wanting one; does not free and fair contract say that A is justified in getting what he can out of B for the use of the spade? That is to say, although B may suffer no inconvenience from being deprived of the spade, he is to receive so much from A out of the product of A's labor, over and above the value of the wear and tear of the spade as it would be determined by free exchange of commodities. In the end, in short, he is to receive back the spade with so much usury, and can then lend it out to some one else on similar terms, thus living in idleness at other people's expense.

This looks like a defence of commercial interest, but it isn't really; it is all nonsense.

First of all, those who use the above argument (and Bastiat is one of them) leave out of sight the most important factor entering into our commercial relations of today, and necessarily entering more and more into them as the division of labor and consequent handing-on of products from one set of producers to another increases, namely, *competition;* there isn't only *one* man with *one* spade in the world, there are hosts of men engaged in making spades and desiring to get rid of them when made, because they have no use for them themselves: and I contend that in this competitive age it is just as much to the interest of one set of men to hand on the spades they have made as it is to another set to receive them and use them for further production.

It is simple nonsense to suppose that it is to the interests of the producers at each stage of production to stop and say: "Oh! no, we will not pass these goods on to the next set of workers unless they pay us something over and above their value, because they are at our mercy!" If they do this at all in our present commercial system, it seems to me that it can only arise from a lack of proper competition in the means of recording debt and credit and in the circulation of such records in the industrial community.

The agricultural implement-makers *want* to pass on their goods to the agricultural laborers: the latter *want* to pass on their produce to the cotton-spinners: these again *want* to pass on their products to bootmakers, cloth-weavers, engineers, etc., etc., and they are distressed and reduced to starvation when they can't do so; there is then a glut of the market, or a "depression of trade." We must therefore ask what artificial obstructions or monopolies hinder the free circulation of commodities; or, again, if a tax called interest is levied at each transfer, we must ask ourselves who are the taxers, and why do they tax?

At any rate, in dealing with this question of interest, it behooves us to take competition into account, to observe that competition in lending necessarily reduces interest, whether it is just or not, and further to ask ourselves whether competition is likely to eliminate interest altogether, and if not, why not?

There is, however, another point we must not ignore, — namely, the confusion which exists in most men's minds, and which constantly manifests itself in these discussions, in regard to the lending of *products* on the one hand, and on the other the lending of *money* or *banking accommodation*, which enables products to be transferred from one set of producers to another.

When I pay £100 in gold into the bank, or when I pay in a check to that amount, or when I subscribe £100 towards the construction of a railway, *I am not lending products;* I am simply (in the case of the railway, for instance) *enabling products to be handed on* to the navvies and engineers who construct the railway. The interest, therefore, which I obtain is *not a payment for the loan of products* (disciples of Bastiat, please note), but a tax which I can levy for the use of the circulating medium or banking credit that I can command.

And this seems to me to be the *crux* of the whole question. By this must the question of interest stand or fall. Are the means of hardening on products from one set of laborers to another as *free* as they might be? Is there any obstruction, are there any legal restrictions on the mediums of circulation, or on banking credit, which by interfering with the circulation of products give a power to a financial class to levy a duty or tax on every transfer of products, and so prevent interest being competed down to the vanishing point, and at the same time cause those obstructions of trade and gluttings of the market which recur periodically, and which one eminent economist attributed to spots on the sun?

I contend that there are such restrictions, and that their removal is the most pressing necessity of the age. I claim that the great question of the day is not the organization of labor, but the organization of credit on free competitive lines.

But what restrictions to credit and circulation are there to remove? In the first place, the presence in the market of legally privileged State money must necessarily interfere with the free circulation of workmen's credit notes, and in the second place a whole mass of restrictions have been placed upon banking, the result being to bolster up a financial sweating system, and to keep the producers from freely coöperating and emancipating themselves from wage-slavery. Free coöperation among the working classes *cannot* satisfactorily establish itself until a free banking system exists.

Interest then, I believe, *can* be eliminated by freedom of money-issuing and banking, and until we obtain such freedom it is no use wasting energy over discussing the morality or immorality of interest on Bastiat-Ruskinian lines. Interest, I believe, *is* robbery, and "capital" is a mere legal fiction, which will vanish when the financial power is destroyed by freedom of credit.

One more word before leaving this subject. It is very necessary to carefully distinguish, in dealing with usury, between one form of property and another, between landed property, which is a creation of the law, because land is not created by human labor, and property in the products of labor. I don't think, although some will differ from me on this point, that free competition in credit can get rid of the form of usury known as land rent, for land, not being a product of labor, is practically limited in quantity, and there cannot be therefore free competition in the lending of land. I myself believe in free land, that is to say, free access to the bounties of nature, and regard land rent as simply a form of legal robbery imposed by the State.

Political Organization versus Mutualism.

[W. N. B. in New York Sun.]

It is difficult to talk lucidly on the questions that have been projected into the field of current discussion by the various phases of Socialism. It is difficult not only on account of the incoherency of the Socialists themselves, but of many of the supposed experts in political and social science. Taking up a journal, for example, which is classed as an economic journal, and is widely known, I read an article on what was conceived by its writer to be the growing popular tendency toward paternalism in government. He first mentioned the broadly manifested disposition to form operative corporations, truly conceiving them to be good illustrations of the tendency among men to work in combination. But in the same breath, or without stopping to bite his quill and reflect, he called attention to the number of municipalities that are engaging in productive enterprises, and to the supposed popular demand for government ownership of the railways, telegraphs, and other industrial, commercial, and financial agencies. He seemed to confound State, municipal, and economic corporations in one inextricable jumble.

The cause of this confusion of ideas, which is widespread and not a peculiar affliction of the writer in question, is the inability of men to comprehend certain first principles in social organization. They do not seem to have discovered that there are two distinct and widely separated forms of organization, the one political and representing what we call government, and the other economic and having for its chief purpose the creation of wealth and its distribution through individual hands. I say that they have not made this discovery. But this seems hardly possible. It would be better to say, perhaps, that if they have made the discovery, they have made it so vaguely, and with such a dim perception of its meaning, that the truth fails to make any impression on their judgment. They are still far from discovering that these two social forces, when it is attempted to drive them both over the same ground, are as irreconcilably antagonistic as two bodies that try to occupy the same space. The pronounced State Socialists, of whom Bellamy in this country is the head, are especially involved in fog. They seem to think that all the purposes of economic organization can be subserved by putting a period to the creation of wealth, the only work really for which any kind of social organization is maintained. They would have an industrial society, inspired by no motive but the desire for subsistence, controlled and driven by the heads of political departments. Many men are advocating paternal and strong government measures without any perception of the fact that they are seeking to destroy the very object for which government exists. They talk of universal coöperation, yet fail to see that their proposed system of cooperation could go no further than a restoration of the conditions that once made it legally possible to pronounce the banding together of two or three workmen a conspiracy against the public interest.

But, however they may be misconceived in their relations to each other, these two forms of organization exist, and, as they frequently collide and work at cross purposes, the one in favor of an abridgment of individual liberty and the other in favor of its extension, it is time for men to make their election and decide upon the system most worthy of their allegiance. Let us divest ourselves of all superstition, whether it be the product of hereditary instincts or training. Political organization, however modified by the advance of enlightenment, is the offspring of the lowest civilization, and it is never completely free from the despotic, intermeddling, and turbulent tendencies of its earlier growth. Economic organization, on the other hand, is the product of a developed civilization. To continue the metaphor, it may be called the fruit of a union between civilization and liberty. It had its origin in the discovery that individuals have higher aims to pursue than anything that can be reached through service to the Crown, and that the well-being of society can be best promoted, not by a form of organization that subjects the individual to the mass, but by a form that enables every man to control his own fortunes and to hold in his own hands the fruits of his personal exertions. . . . .

I said that it was time for men to make their election and choose the system of organization under which they prefer to serve. I might be told by the advocates of State Socialism that the people are making their election and going largely in favor of political organization. As an illustration, I might be pointed to the new party supposed to be crystallizing within and around the Farmers' Alliance movement, and which is determined that the economic banking system shall be destroyed and a political banking system substituted in its place, for this is the real meaning of the Sub-Treasury scheme. I might be told, too, that the political control of the telegraph and the railways is now advocated not alone by the professed cranks and beggars on horseback, who are determined to ride to their destination, but by men high in the Government, among whom must be classed, with a qualification, the President of the United States. Still further, I may be reminded of the number of Common Councilmen who have determined to become the fathers of their cities in fact as well as in fiction, and to provide all kinds of necessaries for their constituents. I might be pointed to all these manifestations as a sign that the people are choosing their king, and choosing one that, to the consistent Democrat, must forever look like a dynastic foreigner and usurper.

To say truth, I should be forced to admit the pertinency of these instances. But I shall fall back upon the original proposition. There is a battle in progress between antagonistic forces, and the way out of our complications will be found in giving to the common understanding a clearer comprehension of the nature of the contest and the mischievous inutility of the means that are proposed for placing society on firmer ground. Men fail to see their way because their eyes are not opened to their environment. While few have risen to a full perception of the force, efficiency, and real meaning of economic organization, still fewer have learned to realize how completely it is capable of supplying the need heretofore met by political organization. Whatever may have been necessary during the cycles of a lower civilization, it is true now that society may go forward with perfect safety in restricting political authority and in trusting even its protection and defence to a less irresponsible force. The day is not necessarily distant when political organization may be abandoned altogether, its duties having been assumed by economic agencies. There are few of the departments of government, and especially of so-called municipal government, that might not be made self-sustaining and peaceful fountains for the increase of social wealth instead of a bone of turbulent contention.

It may be held that this is looking too far into the future. It may or it may not be a long forecast, but it is necessary to look into the future when we wish to decide upon the expediency or inexpediency of any proposed measure. A scheme like the Sub-Treasury scheme can seem only like a crazy conception when it is made evident that by economic association men will eventually learn to do everything for themselves which it is now proposed to do by political machinery. It will seem doubly crazy, too, when we reflect that the atmosphere of every country ruled politically, which means every country on the globe at this time, bears a surcharged thunder cloud, ready at intervals to spread abroad desolation and death.

On every just consideration that can be conceived, economic organization should be exalted and political organization abased. Yet even when men get a scintillation of the truth they do not seem to know how to make the spark luminous. When they wish to reform politics they appeal at once to political agencies, on the theory, I suppose, that it takes the hair of the dog to cure the bite. We saw this illustrated in the recent municipal canvass in New York City and the remedy seems to have been distributed throughout the country. It is taken eagerly by the members of the Farmers' Alliance. They denounce the politicians, and then directly propose to ride the political horse themselves, even though they can do no more than hold on by the crupper. They think that the poor animal has not been well enough ridden. But sensible men will prefer an experienced to an inexperienced rider.

Our farmer friends will have to learn, as our city friends have already learned to their cost, that the best way to reform the politician is to cease magnifying his office. In accordance with the good old Democratic theory, they must try to restrict his authority to the lowest possible limit. His importance is declining; and Democratic politicians, when not drawn from their accepted constitutional ground by cranks, are glad to admit this truth, and to surrender everything but their supervisory duties into the hands of the proper custodians. In this policy they see all that promises to be peaceful, hopeful, and progressive in the relations of men.

Architecture Under Nationalism.*

Originally published in serial shape, by the "American Architect," this work is now republished as above, as a pamphlet.

In it the author recites the degradation of art at the present time, and describes the characteristics of architecture, and of fine art in general, at the periods of highest development in the past; asserting that such another period, but excelling all that has gone before, would occur under the Nationalistic system.

Such a method of unsupported prophecy makes it necessary to regard this book as a rhapsody rather than as an economic treatise. It has apparently never occurred to the author to ask himself whether these delightful results could reallly follow the system which he seems to have in mind: it is doubtful whether he has thought of the possibility of the governmental method being even questioned.

In fact, in the very first words of his book, — in his definition of Nationalism, — he ignores methods altogether, and defines it, not as a means of reaching an end, but as the end to be reached. "Nationalism may be defined as the substitution of universal coöperation and education for industrial and social warfare."

That the results anticipated would not result from governmental action ought to be clear to Mr. Putnam, more than to most people; for he himself is a sufferer by governmental repression, and the profession to which he belongs suffers in turn by losing the advantages which Mr. Putnam offers to them, but which government forbids them to accept.

To explain: Mr. Putnam has invented a very clever sewer-gas trap, which is free from the objectionable points of the usual trap.

Some years ago there was a wail from "sanitarians." The system of plumbing then in vogue was questioned; its defects were pointed out clearly and intelligently, and better methods were devised. People read the sanitarians' books, saw that they were reasonable, and forthwith began to have their plumbing overhauled. Then steps in government, through its Boards of Health in the various cities, and lays down a series of stringent rules, in conformity with the best knowledge of the time, according to which all plumbing must be done. Since then Mr. Putnam has invented his trap, which is widely used wherever boards of health are unknown, while in the larger cities architects cannot use it because the influence of powerful "master-plumbers'" associations is sufficient to cause the existing, and vastly more expensive, method to be retained, just as for many years the influence of the "bluestone men" made it illegal to use anything but bluestone for coping in New York City.

Why should Mr. Putnam suppose that government boards of the future would antagonize a strong voting interest for the sake of recommending the "best" appliances any more than it does now?

Let Mr. Putnam look a little further, and he will find that none of the future happiness which he depicts, and which we desire as earnestly as he, can possibly come from the paternalism that seems to him so much a matter of course.

We might go further and point out that the periods of highest development of architecture, to which Mr. Putnam alludes, — the Greek period and the twelfth-to-fourteenth-century Gothic period, — were periods not so much of "national" development as of the declaration and defence of liberty.

Liberty is the life of art, as of all other things; paternalism and slavery are its destruction.

As another scrap of evidence of the tendencies of thought, however, Mr. Putnam's book is most interesting. The evils of the present he feels and deplores; the possibility of better things he sincerely welcomes. He may be taken as a fair type of Nationalist: indignant against present wrong, ardent for future right; ignorant of economic causes, knowing only rough and ready "State cobbling"; yet, when many are filled with the strong desire for better things, the first step is taken. Between desire and action reflection must take place, in thinking animals. The period of desire seems to have come in the hearts of many; when the reflection comes, if there be time for reflection, then will be the sudden growth of Anarchism, which we now see in Nationalism.

JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that he editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Edward Atkinson's Evolution.

The great central principle of Anarchistic economics — namely, the dethronement of gold and silver from their position of command over all other wealth by the destruction of their monopoly currency privilege — is rapidly forging to the front. The Farmers' Alliance sub-treasury scheme, unscientific and clumsy as it is, is a glance in this direction. The importance of Senator Stanford's land bill, more scientific and workable, but incomplete, and vicious because governmental, has already been emphasized in these columns. But most notable of all is the recent revolution in the financial attitude of Edward Atkinson, the most orthodox and cock-sure of American economists, who now swells with his voice the growing demand for a direct representation of all wealth in the currency.

In a series of articles in Bradstreet's and in an address before the Boston Boot and Shoe Club, this old-time foe of all paper money not based on specie, this man who fifteen or twenty years ago stood up in the town hall of Brookline in a set debate with Col. Wm. B. Greene to combat the central principle of Mutual Banking, this boor who has never lost an opportunity of insulting Anarchism and Anarchists, now comes forward to save the country with an elaborate financial scheme which he offers as original with himself, but which has really been Anarchistic thunder these many years, was first put forward in essence by Proudhon, the father of Anarchism, and was championed by Atkinson's old antagonist, Col. Wm. B. Greene, to the end of his life. Of course, all the papers are talking about it, and, on the principle that "everything goes" that comes from the great Atkinson, most of them give it a warm welcome, though precious few of them understand what it means. Those which probably do understand, like the New York "Evening Post," content themselves for the present with a mild protest, reserving their heavier fire to be used in case the plan should seem likely to gain acceptance.

The proposal is briefly this: that the national banks of the country shall be divided into several districts, each district having a certain city as a banking centre; that any bank may deposit with the clearing-house securities satisfactory to the clearing-house committee, and receive from the clearing-house certificates in the form of bank-notes of small denominations, to the extent of seventy-five per cent. of the value of the securities; that these notes shall bear the bank's promise to pay on the back, and shall be redeemable on demand at the bank in legal-tender money, and, in case of failure on the bank's part to so redeem them, they shall be redeemable at the clearing-house; and that this new circulating medium shall be exempt from the ten per cent. tax imposed upon State bank circulation.

Of course a scheme like this would not work the economic revolution which Anarchism expects from free banking. It does not destroy the monopoly of the right to bank; it retains the control of the currency in the hands of a cabal; it undertakes the redemption of the currency in legal-tender money, regardless of the fact that, if any large proportion of the country's wealth should become directly represented in the currency, there would not be sufficient legal-tender money to redeem it; it is dangerous in its feature of centralizing responsibility instead of localizing it; and it is defective in less important respects. I call attention to it and welcome it because here for the first time Proudhon's doctrine of the republicanization of specie is soberly championed by a recognized economist. This fact alone makes it an important sign of the times.

I am surprised that its importance has not been fully appreciated by the Galveston "News," which journal alone among the great dailies of the country is an exponent of rational finance. Its editor, in noticing Atkinson's scheme, instead of pointing out its introduction of a revolutionary principle, remarks that "the one infallible way to reach the ideal of a sound system of organized credit is to reach the ideal of a population correspondingly sound in character and intellect." This philistine utterance I hardly expected from such a quarter. It is undoubtedly true that a considerable degree of character and intellect is necessary to the successful organization of credit. But this truth is now a truism. There is another truth, not a truism, for the inculcation of which there is pressing need, — that credit, once organized, will do as much to develop character and intellect as the development of character and intellect ever did to organize credit. It was this truth, and the important bearing that the monetization of all wealth would have upon it, that I expected to see emphasized by the Galveston "News" in its comments upon Atkinson's proposal. I hoped, and still hope, to hear it rejoice with Liberty that the man whose solutions of the labor problem have consisted mainly of nine-dollar suits and ten-cent meals and patent ovens has at last broached a measure that, instead of being beneath contempt, is worthy of profound consideration.

T.

The Right to Buy and Sell Liquor.

No greater contrast can be imagined than that subsisting between my views and the views of the New York "Voice," the organ of prohibition. Not alone in our principles and methods do we differ, but also in our logic; not alone in our conclusions, but also in our interpretation of experience and rules of evidence. Hence no controversy between us can ever be fruitful or instructive. I admire the sincerity and frankness of the "Voice," but I take the liberty to declare that I find it impossible to regard with anything like respect its logic and its philosophy. It does not understand the truths which I consider fundamental and vital, and never will. I shall not therefore make any great effort to convince the "Voice" of the error of its ways, but will content myself with so answering its criticism upon the attack I recently made upon the Federal Supreme Court for a liquor decision as to place the "Voice" in a position to grasp the grounds of those who demand liberty.

By way of justifying the prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors by retail, the "Voice" alleges that the man who runs a saloon "deprives other men of clear heads, families of means of support, children of equal opportunities with other children" Did the saloon keepers really do this, they would be criminals deserving of severe punishment. But what men do they deprive of clear heads? All men who happen to be their neighbors? No. All men who visit them? No. Some men? "Yes," will be the reply of the "Voice." But how? By giving them that which they ask and desire. Is it a crime to supply a man with a commodity he wants? Granted that some men drink more than is good for them; but some men eat more than is good for them, and some men work more than is good for them. The reason urged for making liquor-selling a crime applies to the selling of eatables and the giving of work to those who apply for it. It is no crime to sell razors and knives; yet some men kill themselves with these weapons. I hope not to fall very low in the editor's esteem by confessing that I am rather fond of a glass of beer, a cocktail, and a glass of claret. My friends, the saloon keepers, have not deprived me of a clear head yet, and I do not think they ever will. Will the editor of the "Voice" claim that I have no right to ask for a drink, or that the saloon keepers have no right to sell me one? Not unless he is *very* illogical. But if *I* have a right to ask for a drink, any and every man has such a right. It is no business of the saloon keeper's to inquire into the antecedents of his customers and find out the "tonnage" of each of them.

The position of the "Voice" would be logical and tenable if saloon keepers were in the habit of dragging in people by main force and compelling them to drink intoxicating liquors and pay for the drinks thus forced down their throats. Then could it be said that men were deprived of clear heads, etc., by the saloon keepers. As long as no force is used, and the saloon keepers can be convicted of nothing more serious than giving men that which they ask, it cannot be logically said that the saloon keepers deprive anybody of anything. The "Voice" cannot distinguish between philosophical necessity and arbitrary control or forcible interference. The remedy for human weakness, vice, and disease is not to be found in the denial of rights and the suppression of legitimate activities.

V. Y.

Peculiar "Scientific" Methods.

Whether from ignorance or disingenuousness, the State Socialists religiously refrain from attacking the position of logical and consistent champions of liberty. They find it easy to create dissatisfaction with things as they are, and they have manifestly come to the conclusion that it is necessary for them to pretend that the only alternative to the prevailing order is complete State Socialism. The fact that there are schools which, while rejecting State Socialism, hesitate not to denounce the existing system, and labor for the achievement of a better arrangement, is not one that they can conveniently recognize. They frantically call upon the people to embrace their proposals, warning them that in these alone is salvation to be found. The present system they call the embodiment of the principle of individual liberty and unrestricted competition, utterly disregarding the protest of those who think otherwise. Even the most philosophical and dignified State Socialists are guilty of acting upon this policy, which is so inconsistent with self-respect and the scientific spirit.

Recently E. Belfort Bax, the ablest Marxian Socialist in England, delivered an address on "Socialism *versus* Liberalism" before the National Liberal Club of London. After describing the feudal principles and institutions and their steady decay under the fire of the revolutionary *bourgeoisie*, Mr. Bax says:

> Finally, in this nineteenth century, the right of every individual to autonomy has been conceded. But now, when the victory is won, — a victory necessary in the interest of progress, and without which Socialism would have been impossible, — it is seen that individual autonomy, — that is, individual liberty as conditioned by private property, — is a failure, inasmuch as the institution of private capital is incompatible with liberty in any other than a formal sense. . . .
>
> Mediævalism is broken down all round; the surviving relics of the social and political organization of the elder world are either gone or fast going; the individual is emerging free and equal before the law. . . . . It is not the legal position into which a man is born that weighs him down; it is the contract he is compelled to make out of his own free choice. Progress, therefore, on the old lines of individual freedom before the law has plainly reached, or is fast reaching, an *impasse* beyond which it is impossible, and would be useless if it were possible, to go any further. Liberal individualism is therefore played out. Progress towards freedom, in short, has turned a corner. Its old position has landed it in a contradiction, inasmuch as the attainment of the maximum of *formal* liberty has produced a maximum of *real* slavery. Free contract under a system of unrestricted individual property-holding has strangled liberty. . . . The middle classes, as the embodiment of the principle of individual autonomy, are now themselves confronted with the proletariat, as the embodiment of liberty, social and individual. The freedom of the individual in and through the solidarity of the community becomes now the watchword of progress.

What have we here, deliberate, studied unfairness, or primitive simplicity? In vain will the reader look

for a single reference to that strong and growing element of radical individualists, to those who emphatically deny that anything even remotely resembling individual autonomy has yet been conceded, that the victory of the individualist principles has been won, that free contract exists or has existed. In vain will the reader wait for a single remark in criticism of those who claim that the evils of our social system are the result of violations of the principle of equal liberty, and that the remedy for the economic maladjustments lies in a further extension of free contract and further restriction of political authority. In vain will the reader wait for Mr. Bax to turn his attention to the real individualists and Anarchists and show them that "it would be useless" to adopt their sclutions. In vain, in vain. "It is impossible to go any further," coolly declares Mr. Bax, and "it would be useless if it were possible." But, O, Scientific Socialist, where is your *proof* of the uselessness? And how can you say that it is "impossible" to go any further when men as intelligent and equipped as you are insist upon the possibility and urgency of going further, very much further? Does your "science" teach you to deny what nobody affirms, affirm what nobody denies, attack what nobody defends, and assume as a palpable fact that which everybody questions? Or, if not this, does your "science" teach you to ignore the strongest objections to your beliefs and the most logical and thoughtful opponents of your doctrines? Is it a "scientific" course to imitate the ostrich and hide the head in the sand? The conspiracy of silence will not prevent the growth, spread, and victory of sound views on economics, politics, and ethics. It is absurd for the State Socialists to feign complete unconsciousness of the existence of those who have done and are doing so much to weaken their ranks, discredit their claims, and diminish their influence. However, if they can stand it, we certainly can.

V. Y.

Huxley on Social Reform.

Professor Huxley does not join the theologians and mischievous philanthropists in singing the praises of the General of the Salvation Army for his scheme of redeeming "the submerged tenth" inhabiting darkest England. He thinks that, at best, the scheme will result in doing very little good at the expense of incalculable harm. He objects to the "corybantic Christianity" of which the Salvation Army is the militant missionary, asserting that the testimony of history no less than the cool observation of all intelligent contemporaries is wholly adverse to the assumption that the excitement of the religious emotions by the peculiar processes resorted to by the Salvationists is a method calculated to amend the conduct of men in a permanent or beneficent way.

This is as it should be. Moreover, it was to be expected that Professor Huxley would perceive the futility of such a scheme of reforming the world, even if the religious element were entirely absent from it. But Professor Huxley indulges in certain general statements and reflections which are as surprising as they are puzzling to those who are conversant with his deliverances on social topics and who have regarded him as at least a logical and consistent thinker. Many have believed that Professor Huxley could be easily convicted of error and even absurdity in his cavalier treatment of ethical and political problems; but nobody has accused him of vacillation and bad logic. Yet his attack on General Booth affords evidence of both these charges. Mr. Robert Buchanan deals so well with one of these points, and scores Professor Huxley so unmercifully, that I may content myself with reproducing his vigorous home-thrusts.

"Few social evils," wrote Professor Huxley in his article, "are of greater magnitude than uninstructed and unchastened religious fanaticism; no personal habit more surely degrades the conscience and the intellect than blind and unhesitating obedience to unlimited authority. Undoubtedly harlotry and intemperance are sore evils, and starvation is hard to bear or even to know of; but the prostitution of the mind, the soddening of the conscience, the dwarfing of manhood, are worse calamities. It is a greater evil to have the intellect of a nation put down by organized fanaticism, to see its political and industrial affairs at the mercy of a despot whose chief thought is to make that fanaticism prevail, to watch the degradation of men, who should feel themselves individually responsible for their own and their country's fates, to mere brute instruments ready to the hand of a master for any use to which he may put them."

Mr. Buchanan's animadversions upon this and sundry other passages of similar import are as follows:

It is so sweet to find one's self a prophet; and did I not prophesy some little time ago in a contemporary that Professor Huxley would soon be converted, "like another Saul?" The archsociologist, the denier of the natural freedom and equality of men, the upholder of "statute of limitations in matters of wrongdoing," the denouncer of freedom as *laissez faire*, the preacher of providence made easy and special governmental supervision in all departments, now wheels round in the very face of Mr. Spencer and cries, "I said so; organization is dangerous; the safeguard of society lies in the freedom of the individual!" . . . . Why, only a little while ago the militant Professor was stumping the magazines and advocating the possibility of advancing evolution by force from without and from above; was "persecuting" the faithful who clamored to be saved or damned in their own fashion; and here he is already, struck down by a light from heaven (or some other dwelling-place of the aristocracy), proclaiming that he, too, is of the faithful, of the poor persecuted remnant which "believes." . . . .

Either Professor Huxley was always rational, or he was, all along the line, inconsistent. If he was rational, he failed to express his ideas logically, and if he was inconsistent, like most persecutors, he needed, besides logic, fuller light and edification. With what fervor did he argue (in his favorite metaphorical manner) against the fatuity which would place the guidance of a ship in the hands of the crew instead of those of the captain; against the "reasoned savagery" of those who would, it seemed to him, uphold the natural "rights" of even the man-eating tiger. Then we wanted leadership, organization, espionage even, and scientific police; now all these things are perilous, and General Booth, with his tom-toms and military orders, is threatening the lives of "individual" men. Yesterday Professor Huxley was championing that over-legislation which would mean the slavery of all mankind; today he is protesting against the strong men and questioning the would-be legislators. A little while ago he was Mr. Herbert Spencer's deadliest opponent, just a pirouette, and here he is at Mr. Spencer's feet. Truly a miraculous conversion. All our fears were vain. The protector of the loaves and fishes, the peripatetic providence incarnate, will harm us no more. Only a few steps further, and the Saul of the *status quo* will be the St. Paul of Individualism.

Frankly, however, I distrust both this Saul and the other of the New Testament as persons possessing neither great logic nor trustworthy insight into human nature. The converted persecutor is sure to lapse backwards during the very process of edification. . . . Am I wrong in suggesting that now, as always, the pragmatic temperament and the anti-theological bias have far more to do with Professor Huxley's attitude than any real conversion to the individualism he has hated so cordially and so long? I may be wronging a saint *in posse*, but I cannot help believing that Professor Huxley would be far less shocked by the Salvation Army if it used the shibboleth of science in lieu of that of Christianity; if it were beating its tom-toms in the name of David Hume instead of that of Jesus of Nazareth. Your scientist will endure a good deal of noise, a great deal of fussy organization, when the object is secular and not religious.

Pertinent as these strictures are, there is to be found more serious fault with Professor Huxley for a proposition, made with great assurance, which is vitiated by a logical fallacy and which, from its essential incorrectness, is likely to prove a source of evil under the manipulation of uncritical admirers of the scientific leader. Read the following:

There are one or two points upon which I imagine all thinking men have arrived at the same convictions as those from which Mr. Booth starts. It is certain that there is an immense amount of remediable misery among us; that, in addition to the poverty, disease, and degradation which are the consequences of causes beyond human control, there is a vast, probably very much larger, quantity of misery which is the result of individual ignorance or misconduct and of faulty social arrangements. Further, I think it is not to be doubted that, unless this remediable misery is effectually dealt with, the hordes of vice and pauperism will destroy modern civilization as effectually as uncivilized tribes of another kind destroyed the great social organization which preceded ours. Moreover, I think all will agree that no reforms and improvements will go to the root of the evil unless they attack it in its ultimate source, — namely, the motives of the individual man. Honest, industrious, and self-restraining men will make a very bad social organization prosper; while vicious, idle, and reckless citizens will bring to ruin the best that ever was, or ever will be, invented.

Does not Professor Huxley wish us to understand him as opposing and discountenancing any and every scheme of reform that does not go to the root of the matter, — that does not involve the reform of the individual man? Clearly, he does; and he moreover tells us that he thinks all will agree with him. By implication we are assured that the remediable misery in society is the result of individual ignorance and perversity. But the professor started out by stating that the vast quantity of remediable misery among us is the result of individual ignorance or misconduct *and of faulty social arrangements*. There are then at least *some* reforms which, though not aimed at the motives of the individual man, nevertheless go to the root of evil; then the people who do not for the time being concern themselves with the "individual man," but who endeavor to reform the social arrangements, are not guilty of curing symptoms and of wasting their energies on changing the direction of the results. Not only therefore is it not true that "all will agree" with Professor Huxley that the motives of the individual man must be attacked in every case of attempted improvement, but it is not true that the professor agrees with himself in thinking so. He knows that there are "faulty social arrangements" which need to be reformed. What he apparently does not know is that these social arrangements must be attended to first, that during their existence no attempt to reform the individual man can be successful, and that when they are reformed, the reform of the individual man will be an easier task than he imagines. Another thing Professor Huxley does not suspect is that he is no authority on matters political and ethical, and that, in essaying to deal with them, even his logic fails him. But others are fully aware of these things, and they will watch Professor Huxley's excursions into politics and duly report his indiscretions and transgressions.

V. Y.

The Reward of Authors.

To the Editor of Liberty:

In my judgment the discussion on copyright in your paper, as well as in the "Twentieth Century," has drifted into fields in which the bearing on a rational foundation is totally lost. The only basis on which the question must stand or fall is that of social expediency, that of justice. Is it expedient, is the happiness of society furthered, if a right of ownership to his literary productions is extended to the author, in the sense in which it is expedient to extend to the hatter an exclusive right to the possession of his hats or whatever he can get for them in free exchange? To this question only one answer appears possible, and this is an affirmative answer. (1)

Were it considered proper for any publisher to copy any new work without the author's consent, the authorized publisher should be obliged to compete with the copying publisher, and could therefore in no way afford to remunerate the author for his labor. And, authors having no earthly chance of being financially remunerated by any other means, they would simply not write, and we should be without a literature. (2) It cannot avail to say that some would write notwithstanding, feeling fully remunerated by one sentiment or another. It might as well be said that the hatter, even if the hats he produces are confiscated for the general good, will work for the fame of making superior hats, or the shoemaker, for the honor of producing the best-fitting shoes, or that all workmen will emulate their superiors in the endeavor to excel them. (3) This argument would consistently lead us to rank communism, for it cannot be denied that in a communistic state all kinds of commodities would be made; but is this a sound reason for advocating communism? (3) I think not. If we want good hats, we must give a substantial inducement to those who make them. Why should we not offer the same to the authors if we feel gratified by reading their works?

Now, then, if expediency dictates to the truly intelligent to abstain from copying literary works without the consent of the author, — and without a unanimous abstinence of this kind we should be without their works, — then the right of ownership in literary works is just, and in an ideal society, such as the Anarchists picture, a unanimous sanction of exclusive use of literary productions must prevail. (5)

Before concluding, please permit me a few remarks. If public abandonment to the author of the right to publish his productions is necessary to augment the happiness of a people, by giving them a literature, then the infringement of such exclusive right is a breach of equal freedom in the sense in which equal freedom is violated by a failure of abstaining from appropriating the produce of the hatter, since the law of equal freedom is deduced from the premise of the attainment of a maximum of happiness. (6) And if anyone takes liberties that violate the equal liberty of others, would

you advocate to apply some measure that would tend to limit this liberty? (7) If not, then what is your conception of freedom, and what of freedom as qualified by Spencer's proviso?

HUGO BILGRAM.

PHILADELPHIA, JANUARY 3, 1891.

It gave me considerable satisfaction to try to answer Mr. Yarros's argument for copyright, because Mr. Yarros and I start from a principle which we hold in common, and, if one can show that the other deviates from it, then a point is gained. It gives me much less satisfaction to answer Mr. Bilgram, because I have to follow him through a series of considerations based upon a standpoint which I must begin by repudiating, so that the result in any case cannot be particularly helpful.

(1) Nevertheless, impossible as it may appear, I answer this question in the negative. I admit social expediency as a test of social solutions. But what is social expediency? To me the highest social expediency consists in adherence to general rational principles of social conduct. These principles are matters of discovery. The principle of property is already discovered, — namely the exclusive control by each individual of the results of his exploitation of nature, so far as he may have it without impairing the equal right and opportunity of every other individual to similarly exploit nature. I maintain that the latter may be secured, forcibly if necessary, in the exclusive right to possess or sell his hats, without impairing the equal right of any other person. I maintain that the author cannot be forcibly secured in the exclusive right to possess or sell an arrangement of words which he has made public, without impairing the equal right of every other person. I argued this question at length in the last number of Liberty. It is the question which must be settled before any progress can be made in this controversy. It is the question which Mr. Yarros and I are discussing. It is the question which Mr. Bilgram declines to discuss on the ground that it is an irrational foundation. I must simply disagree with Mr. Bilgram, and turn his criticism back upon himself.

(2) I deny that, in the absence of copyright and in the presence of competition, authors would have "no earthly chance of being financially remunerated." In what I shall say under this head, I shall speak as a book publisher and an expert, and I claim for my statements as much authority as may rightfully be awarded to expert testimony. It is a rule, to which exceptions are very rare, that, even in the absence of copyright, competing editions are not published except of books the demand for which has already been large enough to more than reasonably reward both author and publisher for their labor. Take, for instance, a paper novel that retails at fifty cents. We will suppose that for this book there is a demand of ten thousand copies. These copies cost the publisher to make and market, say, seventeen cents each. He pays the author five cents for each copy sold, — that is, the customary royalty of ten per cent. of the retail price. The total cost to the publisher, then, is twenty-two cents per copy. He sells these books to the jobbers at twenty-five cents each, leaving himself a profit of three cents a copy. He probably has orders from the book-trade for three to six thousand copies before publication. If the final demand is not to exceed the edition of ten thousand copies, the sale of the balance will drag along slowly and more slowly, through several years. During this time the author will receive as his royalty five hundred dollars in payment for a book which he was probably less than sixty days in writing. I maintain that he is more than reasonably paid. No rival edition of his book has sprung up (we are supposing an absence of copyright) for the reason that the demand did not prove large enough to induce a second publisher to risk the expense of making a set of plates. But now let us suppose that on publication so brisk a demand had immediately arisen as to show that the sale would be twenty thousand instead of ten thousand. The publisher, as before, would have sold three to six thousand in advance, and the balance of the first ten thousand would have disappeared before any rival publisher could have made plates and put an edition on the market. As before, then, both author and publisher would have been more than adequately paid. But at this point steps in the rival. Having to pay no author and to do no advertising, he can produce the book at say fourteen cents a copy, and perhaps will sell it to the trade at twenty cents. It now becomes optional with the author and first publisher to maintain the old price and sell perhaps one thousand of the second ten thousand, or to reduce, the one his royalty and the other his profit, sell the book to the trade almost as low as the rival, and control nearly half the subsequent market. In either case, both author and publisher are sure to get still further pay for services that have already been more than reasonably rewarded, and the public meanwhile benefits by the reduction in price. Why has no competing edition of "The Rag-Picker of Paris" been published during the six months that it has been on the market? Simply because, though a more than ordinarily successful novel, it did not develop a sufficient demand to tempt another publisher. Yet it has paid me more than equitably. Why, on the other hand, did two competing editions of "The Kreutzer Sonata" appear on the market before mine had had the field two months? Simply because the money was pouring into my pockets with a rapidity that nearly took my breath away. *And after my rivals took the field, it poured in faster than ever*, until I was paid fifty times over for my work. I long to find another book that will tempt somebody to compete with me. Competition in the book business is not to be shunned, but to be courted. How ridiculous, then, to claim that, when there is competition, authors will not be rewarded! But why, it will be asked, do authors and publishers clamor for copyright? I'll tell you why, Mr. Bilgram; it is because they are hogs and want the earth. I am sorry that you are so anxious to give it to them. As G. Bernard Shaw has well said, the cry for copyright is the cry of men who are not satisfied with being paid for their work once, but insist upon being paid twice, thrice, and a dozen times over.

(3) Even though authors, without copyright, could not get their reward, I think it would still avail a good deal to say that they would write notwithstanding. It does not follow that, because a hatter will not make hats for pleasure, an author will not write books for pleasure. I am a printer by trade and an editor for pleasure. Though I am an enthusiast in typography, I should never set type for enjoyment. But not only do I edit for enjoyment; I even pay heavily in money for the privilege. There is something in art and literature that compels their devotees into their service. And I am of the opinion that it would be much better for both and for the world if they could be entirely divorced from commerce.

(4) If to claim that certain things are properly appropriable, and that certain other things, — ideas, for instance, — are not properly appropriable, is to be a communist, then I am a communist; whether a rank one or not, I neither know nor care.

(5) Here the premise may be right, but the conclusion does not follow. I may think it expedient not to copy literary works without the authors' consent, without necessarily thinking it expedient to prevent others from doing so.

(6) Here the conclusion follows, but the premise is wrong. Public abandonment to the author of the exclusive right to publish his productions is not necessary to the people's happiness or to literature.

(7) Yes.

T.

Virtuous Liars.

Have you heard Mr. Bernard Shaw on the "Trumpet," accompanied by Mr. Auberon Herbert on his own organ? If so, you will have come to the opinion that there is a good deal of pleasing discord in both the Individualist and Socialist camps. I should not have joined in the chorus had it not been that Mr. (the Rev., I believe) E. D. Girdlestone, a Socialist and a Fabian, has already done so. (See "Free Life," December 12, 1890.) He therein denounces Mr. Shaw's ethical creed under the name of Shawism, and, by way of further damnification, he calls it "Individualism in Masquerade." After carefully premising that even the Devil should not be painted blacker than he is, Mr. Girdlestone proceeds to paint Mr. Shaw as a raging lunatic. What Mr. Shaw did say, and, as I think, truly, is that it is right to do whatever is expedient. "It is right," he says, "to tell lies whenever it is expedient to do so"; "and," he adds with sardonic humor, "what is rather more out of the way, I think it right to tell the truth whenever it is expedient to do so." At this expression of belief both Mr. Herbert (Individualist) and Mr. Girdlestone (Socialist) hold up their hands in pious horror. By so doing they admit that lying may be expedient. Now, inasmuch as (according to the admission of at least one, and perhaps both these gentlemen) the liar is steadily moving forward to the land of the immortal worm where the fire is not quenched, and where even Mr. Parnell cannot feel sure of finding a fire-escape handy, it must follow that, in the opinion of Mr. Shaw's critics, it may be expedient to go to hell. But as most of Liberty's readers have learned to dispense with that receptacle for their enemies, I will take higher ground. While cordially agreeing with Mr. Shaw that lying is always right when it is expedient, I will add that it is seldom expedient, — almost never, — much seldomer than men like Mr. Girdlestone seem to suppose. That gentleman practically admits that, if he were not a Christian, he would be a liar. I am glad he is a Christian, because liars are nuisances. Lying unselfishly — *e. g.*, to shield a friend — renders one more prone to lie in future in a less unselfish cause. Moreover, it wounds the conscience, and that in itself is painful, seeing that conscience is the instinct inherited through many generations. These evils are consequent upon lying, even when the lie remains undiscovered. When the liar is found out, then the loss of credibility handicaps him enormously, and the loss of reputation must also be added to the harmful consequences. In short, the proposition that as a general rule lying is inexpedient is a doctrine to be taught in the nursery, in the schools, in the market-place. It is a moral law as trustworthy as the laws of mechanics. Truthfulness is one of the grandest products of aeons of evolution. And those who, like Mr. Girdlestone, *try* to weaken it by removing its foundations from the eternal rock of nature to the shifting sand of their own fancy deserve the execration of honest men.

It is high time that some ethical society should be formed for the purpose of defending the national morality against the immoral teachings of Christian preachers.

WORDSWORTH DONISTHORPE.

No Legal Privilege for Science.

[Free Life.]

Immense is our debt to Science. The light that has come to us, and is coming from every direction, is of the highest, almost immeasurable, value. We could not possibly climb to that point where we would be, except for what Science has done and is doing. But we can also see that Science may at any moment become, in part at least, the enemy as well as the friend of man. Arm it with any authority, entrust it with powers of regulation, make it the property of any caste of men, and, as we have only too much reason to believe, it may become one of the worst tyrants that have ever ruled men. We say one of the worst tyrants, because its great inherent qualities would make its yoke the more grievous. The king's yoke and the priest's yoke are easy to break, for it is easy to show to an awakened people the poor material out of which they both are constructed. But it is not so with Science. Except for those who possess a disciplined brain, and have time and thought at their disposal, it is hard to fight the scientific man, even when he goes wrong. He has the great advantage — however wrong he may go in his general conclusion, in the application of his craft to social life — of knowledge of facts over ignorance; and the man who has a juster perception and truer judgment still fights with him at a great disadvantage.

I see this in all the questions that affect health, the houses and streets we live in, that affect social customs, and the relations of men to each other, that affect animals; the weight of argument tends to go with the man who has mastered the details, and the passive crowd follows him. He may be quite wrong — very often is wrong — in the measures he recommends, but victory inclines to him because he knows the details.

Now those of us who see the deep evil of all regulation must fight with every means in our power against this undue ascendency of Science. Great, beyond words almost, is our debt to Science. But Science must be, like all other valuable forces, the servant, not the master of men. It must be content to offer its gains and possessions to men, for them to accept or to reject, it must not be allowed to dictate. Whenever in the persons of doctors, who wish to make a

monopoly of their profession, and to prescribe what we shall do and not do; of sanitarians, too idle to persuade and spread general intelligence, and in love with some ideal picture of a Perfect, who in Paris or New York have simply to decree *fiat lux*; of other scientific men, who ask the Government to find them positions, salaries, and a power of direction over officials of Government departments, inflicting their views of the day upon their fellow men, as if they were a superior class of being carved out of some infallible stuff, — whenever in all such cases we find men making their knowledge a pretence for regulation, we must, in the interests of Science itself, in our love for it, in our acknowledgment of its unrivalled services, fight to the very death that it shall not be seized upon and made a monopoly in the interest of certain sections. Just as the reformers of old days fought that the Bible should not be the property of priests, but of all laymen, so we must fight that the genius of knowledge shall not be the separate possession of any class, nor the instrument of our general subjection. We have done with privileges and monopolies in the interests of rank; we shall indeed be fools if we allow them to grow up in the interests of knowledge.

The medical profession is one of the noblest that exists, but we must take away every shadow of legal protection from it. Like any other trades union, they may frame their own laws for their own guidance; but, outside them, and independent of them, every man must be free to practise who likes, and every fellow man to employ him. We are not going to be deterred by the empty cry of "quacks" into preventing that liberty of calling which is as necessary for the true interests of the medical profession itself as for the interests of the public.

"This Paltry O'Shea Episode."

To the Editor of Liberty:

It is in the above words that Liberty refers to the great Irish scandal. In the same paragraph an attack is made on Michael Davitt for his desertion of Parnell. I should like to ask whether Liberty (like *all* our English papers) has not overlooked the chief feature in this case. Apart from all theories of government, apart from the law of marriage, apart from its religious and its moral aspect, the point is this: — A man who will cheat his friend will betray his country. As for the noisy outcry of Cant (represented by the "Pall Mall Gazette") against the mere act of adultery, I may say that most of us would have thought nothing of that, if the respondent had been a spinster or a widow or the wife of a stranger; neither do we regard with special reverence the husband's proprietary claim to his chattel wife. Even the breach of the eleventh commandment, "Thou shalt not be found out," might have been forgiven. But I solemnly declare that, if Anarchy means the liberty of every man to violate the trust reposed in him by a friend's hospitality, then for such a view of society I can have nothing but loathing and contempt. It matters nothing to me that the pair were what is called "married"; I would have revolted at the selfish treachery just the same if the lady had been a "kept-woman" in St. John's Wood. If poverty had impelled him to pocket his host's silver spoons, I should have despised him less. O'Shea was Parnell's best friend; it was he who negotiated the Kilmainham Treaty by which Parnell was liberated from jail; and it was he who hid him away in his house when threatened by the party of immediate action. And this is his reward. Æsop's fable of the Woodman and the Snake has been retold with redoubled effect.

Yours truly, X.

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